Vol. VIII. Numb. 52

THE OBSERVATOR.

On a Fraud committed near New Brentford, *in Relation to the publick Taxes. That the Tax of* 4 s. per l. *is computed to have fallen a Million* per An. *ſhort of what it might be, thro' the Fault of Aſſeſſors. The great Complaints of Bribery and Corruption. The contrary Practices of the* Dutch, *and their Charity to the Poor. The miſerable Caſe of the poor* Palatines *farther conſider'd, with Propoſals for their ſpeedy Relief.*

From Wednesday, July 27. to Saturday, July 30. 1709.

Country-m. YOUR taking Notice of the great Fraud put upon the Pariſh of St. *James's Weſtminſter* by the Collectors of her Majeſty's Taxes there, Maſter, has occaſion'd you a Letter from a Gentleman, of ſomething of the like Nature committed near *New Brentford*, by a certain Perſon in thoſe Parts, who has born a publick Character, and by his Intereſt in aſſeſſing the Taxes and Poor's Rates, has oblig'd that poor Place to pay 1000 *l.* for him and his Relations, he having got his own Eſtate under-rated, and his Relations excus'd, whereas the Stocks of poor Tradeſmen were rated to make up the Defect. He adds, that they have long ſtruggl'd for Eaſe, but can get none, ſuch Perſons being apt to hold together, and to name Fellows for Aſſeſſors, that will do what they think fit to command them. He deſires you would make this publick, Maſter, that if ſuch People cannot be puniſh'd, they may at leaſt be put to Shame, when they find their Practices diſcover'd to the World.

Obſ. I am afraid Men of that Kidney are ſcarce capable of Shame, *Roger*, they are ſo far given up to a reprobate Senſe. At the ſame Time, I am glad the Perſon complain'd of, is diveſted of his publick Character. No Man deſerves to bear the Queen's Commiſſion, that would defraud her Majeſty and her honeſt Subjects in ſuch a Manner. I think the Gentleman, and others concern'd, ought to ſpeak to their Repreſentatives in Parliament, to bring in a Bill not only to puniſh thoſe who are guilty of ſuch Practices, but to make them pay double Taxes, as Perſons diſaffected to the Government; for we muſt needs reckon thoſe its Enemies, who refuſe to contribute towards its Support, according to Law, and lay their own Burdens upon the Backs of thoſe who are honeſter, as well as poorer than themſelves. There are ſo many Harpies and ravening Wolves of that Sort in the Nation, that if due Care be not taken, they will eat it up in Time. This is one Inſtance more, *Roger*, to prove the Neceſſity of a Committee of Grievances; for nothing leſs than the Legiſlative Power, is able to break the Combinations of ſuch Men, to oppreſs their Neighbours, and cheat the Government.

Country-m. I am of your Opinion, Maſter. 'Tis no Wonder the Nation ſhould grow poor at this Rate, when the Money given by the Parliament, is not duly collected, or when Collectors and Receivers run away with it, as we found ſeveral of 'em did, by the Votes of the laſt Seſſion, which mention'd Leave to be ask'd to compound with the Receivers and Collectors of ſuch and ſuch Counties.

Obſ. The Goverment has, from Time to Time, ſuffer'd very much by ſuch Practices, *Roger*. Dr. *Davenant* takes Notice, in his *Eſſay upon Trade*, that whereas the Tax of 4 *s. per l.* one Aid with another, has produc'd but 1800000 *l.* it ſhould produce, if duly aſſeſs'd, 2500000 *l.* which is juſt a Million ſhort, according to Mr. *King*, the *Lancaſter* Herald's Scheme. I hope when the Parliament meets, they will take Notice of ſuch Abuſes, *Roger*, and not ſuffer the Government and the Nation to be thus abus'd, and the Poor to be oppreſs'd by the covetous Rich, who get into Places and Poſts, and can never have enough, but are always crying, with the *Leech's Daughter*, *Give, give.*

Country-m. You ſee, that Corruption, Bribery, and Covetouſneſs, is become ſo general, Maſter, that Honeſty and Charity are in a manner thruſt out of Doors. The very Money given to the Poor by Briefs, and otherwiſe, cannot eſcape thoſe Leeches; ſo that if Care be not taken in Time, they will ſuck out the very Heart-Blood of the Nation.

Obſ. We are very apt to cry out upon the *Dutch*, as a covetous People, *Roger*; there's nothing more frequent in our Writers, tho' at the ſame Time they own, that there's no Place in the World, where the Poor are ſo well provided for, and where the publick Money is ſo duly apply'd. Frauds and Cheats in that Reſpect, are ſeldom or never heard of there; and if at any Time they happen, the Criminals are ſo ſeverely puniſh'd, as to ſtrike a Terror into ſuch as have the like vicious Inclinations: And tho' their Taxes be the hardeſt and moſt univerſal of any Country in *Europe*, yet Sir *William Temple* obſerves, that the People pay them without murmuring, becauſe they know they are faithfully apply'd; that thoſe who impoſe them, pay the greateſt Proportions themſelves; and that no publick Money goes into private Mens Pockets, to raiſe great Eſtates for their Families, or to ſpend it in Luxury and Riot.

Country-m. I am ſorry, Maſter, conſidering how long we have been in Friendſhip and League with that wiſe People, that we have not learn'd more of their Charity, publick Honeſty, and Frugality. I fancy, Maſter, their Comedians don't find Bags by Wholeſale at their Play-houſes, as ours do, and that their Ladies are not ſo prodigal as to give 20 Guineas at a Time to a Player.

Obſ. No, *Roger*, 'tis reckon'd more odious there for any Man to ſpend all his annual Income, than it is among us for our Rakes to ſpend three times more, and to run on Tick with all that will give them Credit. Were their Comedians as debauch'd as ours, they would quickly ſend them to the *Raſp-houſe*, to grind Braſil and Log-wood, or put them in the *Water-Cellar*, where they muſt either pump or drown.

Country-m. A very proper Puniſhment, Maſter, for ſuch as drown Nations in Lewdneſs and Debauchery. That would cool their Concupiſcence with a Witneſs.

Obſ. I muſt tell you farther, *Roger*, that ſuch as will have this Kind of Diverſion in that Country, muſt pay for it; for at the ſame Time they pay to the Play-houſe, they muſt pay a certain Tax for the Maintenance of the Poor.

Country-m. Had we ſuch a Law here, Maſter, I believe our Play-houſes would be leſs frequented, eſpecially by our Beaus with their Iron-bound Hats, and their Canes at their Buttons, and by ſuch Ladies as have 10 or 20 Guineas at a Time to throw away upon an idle Mimick; for Extravagance and Prodigality are Enemies to Charity. I dare ſay, Maſter, were there ſuch a Tax laid upon Plays, ſuch People would be as loth to frequent them, as now they are to go to Church.

Obſ.

Obſ. What do you hear about the Poor *Palatines*, *Roger?*

Country-m. My Hear bleeds to hear and ſee their miſerable Condition, Maſter. Abundance of 'em die for want of due Proviſion, of convenient Habitations, Dyet, Cloathing, and Bedding; and I ſee but little Proſpect of their being ſpeedily or profitably employ'd; for notwithſtanding all the Care that the Government, and the Commiſſioners appointed for that End, take of them, there's ſuch an Averſion rais'd againſt them by ill People, that the good Intentions of thoſe who are well diſpos'd towards them, are very much obſtructed. I wiſh with all my Heart they were diſpos'd of any Way to Advantage, either in the Plantations, *Ireland*, *Scotland*, or at Home; and that as this Neglect of them is an Addition to our national Sins, it may not haſten national Judgments upon us.

Obſ. I am ſorry at my Heart, *Roger*, to hear, that ſuch a Number of People, who have come ſo far by Sea and Land, in Hopes of finding the Comforts of Life among us, ſhould meet with their Death; and inſtead of being employ'd to cultivate our waſte Ground, ſhould only find Graves in this Iſland. There are too many of us, who know nothing of the Heart of a Stranger, but are rather for vexing and oppreſſing them: A Crime inconſiſtent with Humanity, and therefore prohibited to the Children of *Iſrael* under ſevere Penalties; they were alſo commanded, *not wholly to reap the Corners of their Fields, nor to gather the Gleanings of their Harveſts and Vineyards, but to leave them for the poor Strangers*, whom they were enjoin'd *to love as themſelves, and to treat as thoſe born among them.* This was propos'd to them by the Almighty's own Example, who declar'd, that *he lov'd Strangers, and gave them Food and Raiment.* In like Manner our Saviour commands his Followers *to do Good to all Men, eſpecially to Fellow-Chriſtians, and ſuch as were of the Houſhold of Faith.* He makes it one of the Cauſes for ſending the Wicked into everlaſting Puniſhment, *that when he was a Stranger, they took him not in*, which he himſelf explains of the Neglect of his Followers; therefore we are enjoin'd by the Apoſtle, *not to be forgetful to entertain Strangers, for thereby ſome have entertain'd Angels unawares*; we are to *remember them that ſuffer Adverſity, as being our ſelves alſo in the Body.* The Children of *Iſrael* were enjoin'd to *give the Strangers that ſojourn'd among them, an Inheritance in the Tribes where they ſojourn'd*; and 'twas *Job*'s Comfort under his Affliction, *that he did not ſuffer Strangers to lodge in the Street, but open'd his Doors to the Traveller, that the Loins of thoſe who were ready to periſh for Want of Cloathing, bleſs'd him, and were warm'd with the Fleeces of his Sheep.*

Country-m. I wiſh our Clergy would preach upon thoſe Texts, Maſter, in order to allay thoſe unreaſonable Murmurs that are raiſed among us againſt employing or providing for the poor *Palatines*, and to excite their Hearers to contribute to their Relief out of their Superfluities. This I am ſure is much eaſier to be practis'd, than what the Apoſtle enjoins, that we *ſhould labour and work with our Hands, that we may have to give to him that needeth*; and if the *Jews* were to leave the Gleanings of their Fields and Vineyards for the poor Strangers, much more ought we to ſupply the Neceſſities of thoſe poor *Palatines* out of our Superfluities.

Obſ. You know, *Roger*, that I have again and again propos'd, that Books might be open'd for Subſcriptions, and that the Subſcribers might be incorporated, in order to ſettle and employ them in Colonies; but ſince we have not ſo much of a publick Spirit among us, tho' I think it were eaſy to prove, that the Subſcribers might find their Account in it, I hope the honourable Perſons appointed Commiſſioners, will not take it amiſs, if I ſuggeſt, that ſuch of them as are Men of Eſtates, ſhould give good Examples to others, as I underſtand ſome of them have done, in raiſing a Purſe by voluntary Contributions among themſelves, towards a preſent Supply; and ſince there are ſo many profitable Poſts under the Government throughout the united Kingdom, the Example and Influence of ſo many Perſons of Honour and Quality, might go a great Way to make all thoſe who have any Place of Profit under the Government, by Sea or Land, in Camp, Court, Army, and Fleet, and ſuch Tradeſmen, and others, who get Eſtates by furniſhing our Armies and Fleets, and the Court and Courtiers with what they have Occaſion for, to contribute towards the Settlement and Employment of thoſe poor ſtrangers: And ſhould my Lords the Biſhops make uſe of their Power, Influence and good Example among our rich Clergy, to do the like, I can't think but this, with what may be collected by Briefs, might go a great Way to provide for thoſe Strangers, and not ſuffer them to ſtarve among us, to the Scandal of our Nation, the Diſcredit of our Naturalization-Act, and to the Diſcouraging of any more Strangers to come and ſettle among us. This might ſoon be ſav'd by Perſons of Eſtates and Quality, by retrenching a little of their ordinary Expences, and by others in publick Poſts out of what they ſpend ſuperfluouſly in Taverns, and otherwiſe; ſuch as have a Dependance upon the Government, could not for Shame refuſe this, were they prompted to it by the Example and Influence of thoſe in Authority. But all this with Submiſſion, *Roger.*

N. B. In our laſt, Col. 1. Line 31. read *half the Lawyers*, laſt Line but one, read *not one Word.*

Advertiſements.

☞ All fair Merchants, trading in Wine to Portugal, Spain, and the Levant, are deſir'd to meet C. R. on Tueſday next, the 2d of Auguſt, 1709. at the Union Coffee-houſe over againſt the Royal Exchange, at eleven of the Clock in the Forenoon, to concert proper Meaſures for humbly addreſſing in the ſeveral proper Places, for the more effectual reſtraining the Importation of French Wines from Holland: Doing of which, will give Encouragement to the Woollen Manufacture, and Artificers of this Kingdom, as the Act of Parliament directs and provides in that Caſe. ☞ It's not expected any Merchants that import French Wines in Spaniſh and Portugal Caſks, will be there.

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☞ The Author of the Quinteſſence or Tincture of the Philoſophers, &c. has got ſufficient Aſſiſtance; and therefore publiſhes the ſame, that none may give themſelves the trouble to write to him about it; for no Anſwer will be given to any ſuch Letter.

☞ The Scourge of Venus and Mercury, repreſented in a Treatiſe of the Venereal Diſeaſe; together with an Appendix in anſwer to Mr. John Marten's Reflexions thereupon. By J. Sintelaer, Practitioner in Phyſick, and Author of the Royal Decoction. Price of the Appendix alone bound 6d, together 3s. 6d. Sold by J. Helms in Weſtminſter-hall, R. Goſling at the Mitre in Fleet-ſtreet, W. Carter at the Green Dragon in St. Paul's Church-yard, J. Phillips at the black Bull in Cornhill, H. Ribotteau at the Crown near Cecil-ſtreet in the Strand, B. Picard at the 3 Bibles in the Minories, J. Harding in St. Martins-lane near Long-acre, J. Morphew near Stationers-hall, and by the Author at his Dwelling-houſe (late the Duke of Leeds's) in high Holborn, over againſt little Turn-ſtile.

AT the Whitehall Coffee-houſe over Buckingham Court, near Charing Croſs, a Gentleman is to be ſpoke with every Monday, Wedneſday, and Friday Morning, that undertakes, by the Bleſſing of God, to cure Cancers in Womens Breaſts, and the Diſeaſe vulgarly call'd the King's-Evil, in a very ſhort Time, and that without Inciſion, Cauterizing, Fluxing, or any violent Methods, only by the Uſe of ſuch ſafe and pleaſant Medicines, as may be given and apply'd to a ſucking Child: Which, by their innate Specifick, and approved Vertues, cure both theſe Diſtempers, by rectifying the Diſorders of the Blood, rarifying the ſtagnated Liquors in the Glands, and putting them into Motion. He expects no Money for his Attendance or Medicines, till the Cure is perfected.

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LONDON, Printed by *H. Meere*, and ſold by *B. Bragge* in *Pater-Noſter-Row.* 1709.